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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Feb. 9, 2023

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Fly like an Eagle and make a sober ride home the Chief goal of this year's Super Bowl

Intercepting the keys of impaired drivers at your party is a win for everyone

SPRINGFIELD – This Super Bowl Sunday, the Illinois Department of Transportation, Illinois State Police and numerous local police and sheriff's departments across the state are taking a timeout to spread two very important safety messages to the public – "Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over" and "Click It or Ticket."

"Before your party or the game starts, designate a sober driver or make other arrangements for a safe ride so that you, your passengers and everyone on the roads can return home safely," said Cynthia Watters, IDOT's bureau chief of Safety Programs and Engineering. "Impaired driving is always preventable by simply choosing the right play ahead of time or calling an audible and handing off your keys."

If you're driving this weekend, safety should be your No. 1 priority. When it's time to leave the party, make sure your designated driver is sober. Remember that walking impaired also can be dangerous, so designate a sober friend to walk home with you, if needed.

"The Super Bowl is a game. Driving impaired is not," said ISP Division of Patrol Col. Margaret McGreal. "ISP and other law enforcement agencies will be out in full force Super Bowl Sunday, looking for anyone who is driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs. The penalty for driving impaired is much greater than a yellow flag."

If you're planning on being the designated driver, refrain from drinking alcohol, using cannabis or any other impairing substance – it's that simple. People are relying on you. While at the party, enjoy the food, the company and non-alcoholic drinks. Sober driving isn't the only law that should be followed. Always make sure you and everyone in the vehicle buckles up. It's the best defense in a crash.

If you are attending a Super Bowl party:

- Designate a sober driver ahead of time or plan to use your community's sober ride program, call a cab or your favorite ride-sharing service.
- Don't let friends and family members drive impaired. Help them get home safely.

- Promptly report impaired drivers to law enforcement.

If you're hosting a Super Bowl party:

- Make sure all your guests have a sober ride home.
- Serve plenty of food and non-alcoholic beverages.
- Host your party just like they do at the stadium. Stop serving alcohol at the end of the third quarter. The fourth quarter is perfect for serving coffee and dessert.
- Take the keys away from anyone who is thinking of driving impaired.

The statewide Super Bowl enforcement effort is funded by federal traffic safety funds administered by IDOT.

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